

For the Children

WHAT THEY LOST.

By Frank H. Sweet.

"I'm sorry you lost it," said mother, one day.
As she sat in her corner chair, mending away;
And Richard and Percival looked in surprise,
But mother, still busy, did not raise her eyes.

"Have you lost anything, Richard, today?"
"No, Percival. Haven't you, either?—I say!"
Two little faces grew rosy with shame.
And mother said, "Yes, my dears, temper's its name,"

—Exchange.

JIM'S TELEPHONE MESSAGE.

"Why, you're a smart little fellow to bring such a big basket. It's bigger than you."

Jim looked up with a smile as Mrs. Price's kitchen maid helped him to take the basket of clean clothes off his cart.

"'Taint a bit too big for me," he said proudly. "There wasn't any one else to bring it, 'cause my brother's hurt and couldn't."

They carried the basket into the back hall, and, while Jim waited for Mrs. Price to be ready to pay him, he saw a wonderful thing.

It hung on the wall in a rather dark corner. Mrs. Price stood before it, talking. Without trying to listen, Jim could hear what she said. This was it:

"Hello. Is this number 204? This is Mrs. Price—I want a bushel of potatoes—and ten pounds of sugar—and a pound of tea—and two bunches of celery—and three packages of oatmeal—and a bottle of vanilla." She made a little pause between each order.

Jim was amazed. The town they lived in was small, there were only a few telephones in it, lately put in. He had never heard of them before.

"Mis' Price," he asked, "do all them things come when you tell 'em?"

"Yes, Jimmy," she said, laughing. "Sometimes they keep me waiting a little, but they come sooner or later."

Jim asked his mother about it.

"She talks to a thing that sticks out of the wall," he said. "She asks for all sorts o' good things, and she says they come."

"You must 'a' been mistaken, Jimmy," she said, for she had lived in the country until lately, and, like Jim, had never heard of a telephone. "Likely Mrs. Price was writing out a list or something, and you didn't see straight."

But Jim couldn't get it out of his mind. Surely Mrs. Price said she got things by talking into that odd thing on the wall.

One morning, as he and Jane carried the basket of clothes into the hall, no one was there. And all of a sudden, a bright idea popped into Jim's mind. If Mrs. Price could get things that way, why could not he?

He drew a chair to it, climbed up, and put his mouth to the queer little thing, just as Mrs. Price always did. In the half light he hadn't noticed the thing she held to her ear.

"Hello—this is Jimmy Ray. We want a lot of things to our house, real bad—we ain't got anything to eat but meal and some potatoes. We'd like some bread—and some butter on it—and—Tom's real sick and I have to bring clothes and—if you have any shoes, 'cause mine leak real bad—and some milk for Tom—and some kind of stuff to make him well—please, please—and don't wait very long"—

The pleading voice stopped, and Jim climbed down, his heart beating with hope. Of course, he could not know that his voice had not reached any one inside the telephone.

But some one outside had heard. At sound of the tremulous voice, Mrs. Price had come quietly to a door opening into the hall and heard the telephone message.

She made a visit to Jimmy's home, and saw to it that many comforts found their way there before the brother was able to work, and the mother could find plenty of washing to do.

Later she explained the working of the telephone to Jim. After she left him, he stood for a moment gazing at it.

"Well," he said at length, "you're a mighty nice, handy thing, but I don't know but Mis' Price is about as good as I want."—Sidney Dayre, in the Christian Register.

PRUE'S LESSONS.

Mrs. Wetherbee looked out at the fast falling snow and sighed. "No school today," she said. "Poor Prue!"

Upstairs Prue was dressed, standing at the window. There were many puckers and wrinkles in her face.

"I must go! The snow isn't so very deep. I will coax and coax until mother has to let me."

But she must say her prayers before she went down.

Once at Sunday school Prue had heard an old gentleman pray, and one thing that he asked for had pleased her so much that she had put it in her own prayers every morning since. It was this:

"Oh, God, bless today and make it a good day for us all."

She said it now as usual.

When she was ready to rush down stairs to her mother a sudden thought stopped her with her hand on the knob of the door.

"I know mother won't let me go; it's dreadful weather. And it will be horrid times here all day."

Prue was remembering the words of her prayer.

"I suppose, of course, snowy days can be good and can be blessed as much as others. But I do so hate to stay at home from school and miss my lessons and get behind. But then, when you ask God to make the day good, maybe you ought to let him."

She opened the door and went to her breakfast.

"I am sorry about the stormy morning, Prue, dear," said her mother. "You and I must keep house together today and send our men folks out into the snow."

"Yes'm," said Prue, meekly. She was afraid to trust herself to many words lest they should "be the wrong ones."

Mrs. Wetherbee looked at her as if she felt surprised; then she smiled and patted her on the head.